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Money bail and alternatives to incarceration



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

Last month's column explained how Pay or Stay sentencing destroys the lives of those living paycheck-to-paycheck. This one initiates exploration of how people with ample financial resources get preferential treatment in the criminal justice system, starting with maintaining their freedom prior to conviction. Unless otherwise noted, the quotes below were taken from presentations at the symposium Innocent until Proven Poor, hosted by the Michigan Journal of Race and Law and University of Michigan (U-M) Law School in February of 2016.

"Poverty is both a predictor and consequence of incarceration," according to

Desiree Ferguson, an assistant Defender in the Michigan Appellate Defender Office and a professor at the U-M law school. Unsurprisingly, 67 percent of returning citizens are still unemployed five years after incarceration, Ferguson asserts.

The first brush with bars occurs at arrest, shortly after which a judge decides whether or not the accused should be jailed until trial or released. It used to be customary to release people unless their history suggested that they were likely to flee or pose a threat to the community. It is now customary to require bail in exchange for freedom.

Being incarcerated prior to trial leads to worse outcomes at trial – a higher likelihood of conviction, longer sentences, and guilty pleas with fewer concessions received than by those who were released on bail, according to a *Criminal Justice Policy* article by Meghan Sacks and Alissa R. Ackerman, "Bail and Sentencing: Does Pretrial Detention Lead to Harsher Punishment?"

The failure to secure release pending trial is onerous. Even three days in jail turns a low-risk person into high-risk with regard to recidivism. It also correlates with more severe final sentencing. The Department of Justice (DOJ) declared routine pre-trial detention to be unconstitutional yet it continues as a matter of course.

Local sheriffs dislike when untried people fill their jails. As the accused are commonly held with other prisoners, frequently in overcrowded conditions, jail exposes them to disease, physical violence and sexual assault. There is often significant personal disruption, too, in loss of employment, strained relationships including the possible loss of child custody, interruption of ongoing education or treatment programs and a triggering of anxiety disorders.

Imposing bail greatly disadvantages minorities and the poor. There is frequently no public defender representation at bail hearings, and bond courts are under pressure to process people quickly. Decisions on the risk of flight are made based solely on information such as the lack of a permanent address or employer without looking further to discover other factors, such as dependent children in the area. Bail commissioners often decide bail levels based on the alleged crime without consideration of any personal information except the defendant's criminal history and appearance, opening the door to personal bias.

Technology can ameliorate some bias issues and allow the accused to maintain a normal schedule if implemented for bail assessment. In a calm setting, accused people can describe their current circumstances with the assistance of family and friends, online spell-checkers and translators. Bail commissioners receive a report that includes the charges, prior convictions and the defendant's statement and make their bail recommendation on that basis, thereby removing the bias based on appearance and ability to speak in public.

Matterhorn™ is an online court program designed to enhance access and fairness with technology. It is currently used in Washtenaw County for traffic disputes where it has reduced the combined court staff time per hearing from 157 minutes to just over 27 while also being much more convenient for the motorists. Court Solutions, the Ann Arbor-based company that developed Matterhorn™, is developing software that could be used in determining the need for and level of pre-trial bail on a case-by-case basis.

Industries have sprung up with the prevalence of requiring bail. Bail bondsmen, who have a strong lobby, are the largest beneficiaries but courts also collect fees for bonds. In a Wayne County case, a Groundcover vendor accused of resisting arrest had a 10 percent bond set at \$10,000. The court accepted the \$1,000 financed by a benefactor as surety. (If she had not shown up for trial she would have been liable for the entire \$10,000.) She did appear for her court date but only \$900 was returned – the other \$100 went to the court for fees. Guilty or innocent, fees are not returned.

There is no consumer protection mechanism regarding bail companies. A California woman was arrested and bail was set at \$150,000. The woman was desperate for release since she was the primary care-taker for her grandmother who could not be left alone. It was impossible for her to raise the customary 10 percent – \$15,000 in this case – to secure the money through a bondsman. She accepted the bail company's alternative of paying \$1,500 up front and repaying the remaining \$13,500 – at the highest allowable interest rate – over the ensuing years.

The case was thrown out the next day by the District Attorney and she was never charged with a crime. Nonetheless, she still had to repay the \$13,500 loan and lose the \$1,500.

The principle that a person who has not been convicted of a crime should not lose their liberty was the thrust of the Bail Reform Act of 1966. It calls for a presumption of release of defendants on their personal recognizance, though judges can impose restrictions if they feel there is a danger of flight or further violence. In 1984, Congress passed an act that added conditions for withholding bail to include certain categories of crimes, including drug offenses for which the sentence was greater than 10 years. With the mandatory minimums for drug possession, this led to an avalanche of accused people spending years in jail before ever being convicted.

Bail is rarely imposed in federal cases. If danger to the community or flight are risks, the defendant is equipped with a tether with a range considered safe, sometimes restricted to their home.

State bail laws and procedures vary and are subject to monetary considerations. Milwaukee D.A. John Chisholm implemented an Evidenced-Based Decision Making Framework in 2009, and as a result of that evaluation, is working to get cash out of the bail system.

There are ongoing costs associated with tethers. Tethers have to be purchased, maintained and fitted. Officers have to be available to respond when the tether alarm indicates that it has been taken beyond its designated boundaries or to grant overrides when appropriate. Those costs can be burdensome for the municipality.

The practice of passing these costs on to the accused, along with charges for other pre-trial "services" such as drug testing, further stresses the person who should still be presumed innocent. Costs such as these, which often cannot be paid by the poor, open them up to warrants for a failure to pay, thereby saddling them with a criminal history even if they are ultimately found innocent of the initial crime.

Former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder's directive to minimize mandatory minimum sentencing is part of a culture change that will reduce the number of people incarcerated prior to conviction. But a larger culture shift is called for – one in which the accused is actually treated in accordance with the presumption of innocence. The vast majority of people should be released on their own recognizance.

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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Who crafts the rituals?



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Groundcover Contributor

We who are regular participants in a faith, spirit, or wisdom community often order our lives with specific ritual practices from those communities. Sometimes we mistakenly perceive that rituals only occur in designated community settings under the direction of someone trained to carry them out among us. I know the capacity to design ritual moments of meaning is not held by a few or only intended for institutional expression. Ritual possibilities and those who create them abound. I suspect if you are reading this column, you too are a maker of ritual even if you don't believe it.

Late in 1992 I was in my 15th year of ordained ministry and realized that the beginnings of my life in liturgy and ritual came long before any seminary course. That fall I wrote a piece tracing my sense of liturgy and my

practice of ritual back to my childhood birthday parties. The weather was always lovely in upstate New York in early September when those parties occurred, so they happened outside. What is now important to me about words of invitation, about celebration's opportunity to punctuate time with meaning, about belovedness, about the hospitality of food and refreshments spread out, about surprise, and giftedness, and mirthful play: all of it I learned first at birthday parties when I was a child. My parents didn't have a self-help manual on how to orchestrate a child's birthday party. They just leapt in and made it happen. I did similarly with my daughters, Amanda and Molly. Like my parents before me, we dove inside whatever theme they chose – snow, poetry, recycling, the circus, around the world, an out-of-this-world sleepover, a teddy bear's picnic, buttons, art time – designing rituals and activities to flesh out a party from the invitations all the way to the treat bags. As my kids grew, I was saddened watching other parents who were convinced they were unable to tease out birthday rituals from the stuff of their lives and needed to hire a pizza parlor, an arcade, or another expensive

alternative to do it for them. Then and now, I remain convinced that we have the makings of great rituals waiting to be tapped in our hearts, minds, and guts.

I've been reminded again of that conviction this spring. I visited in and around Ann Arbor for a few days in April. My drive back home to Illinois on Interstate 94 was miserable. The highway was jammed with trucks, and it was raining so hard we could barely see one another. I stopped at a rest stop to use the bathroom and saw there was a text from my friends with whom I'd stayed. They asked how my trip home was going. When I texted back the conditions and requested traveling prayers, I received from them the affirmation that a candle had been lit at their end. Several days later we were in touch again; one of them was presenting a program and was a bit nervous. I told her my candle was lit. As a result of our candle exchange, my morning ritual now includes a simple candle lighting when I name a person or group I want to be especially mindful of throughout the day. Recently in a session with one of my spiritual directees, that directee asked for ideas

on what she might do to rejuvenate her desire to be close to God. Before long we circled around to the option of intentional candle lighting. The very next day with another directee, I suggested we start our time together with a candle practice I use in larger groups. That candle framed out our time and connected us in compassion with any who long for a sense of presence they are not currently feeling. This thread of candles didn't originate with a formal church practice initiated by an ordained church leader on an appointed day. It began with the love of ordinary people in the pews who wanted to communicate through a concrete action their being-with-me during difficult driving. Each of us can figure out gestures of care and attention that embody meaning for us and others. As human beings, we have this ability from within even if it is unused. What rituals are already a part of your daily life or happen periodically across the year? Notice them. Name them. Are there rituals missing in the flow of your days, weeks, months, and years? Listen for gestures to give those rituals texture and shape, embracing meaning for you and for others.

TheRide: major bus system improvements to take effect this month

by Jenny Blair
Groundcover Contributor

On May 1, bus passengers in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti will get a lot of new options.

TheRide, Ann Arbor Transportation Authority's bus service, is expanding its service in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. It's the largest expansion since 1979, the year fixed-route service in Ann Arbor began.

Of the 31 preexisting routes, all but five will get new names or numbers. New routes are coming to Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, and there will also be new service to Scio Township and in Pittsfield Township.

Here are just a few of the many changes to take effect May 1:

- The new Route 30 in Ann Arbor, one of two routes to replace old Route 9, will now stop at the Interfaith Hospitality Network / Alpha House family shelter and proceed to the Meijer on Zeeb Road in Scio Township. (That's well past its old turnaround at Wagner Road, which was a long walk for Alpha House residents.)
- Ypsilanti's notoriously long Route 20 will become a pair of new two-way routes.
- A new Ypsilanti north-south Route 68 will run along Harris and Ford Roads, including a loop to Grove Road.



TheRide's largest expansion since 1979, including new routes and expanded paratransit services, takes effect on May 1.

- More passengers will be able to access ARide, the paratransit program for riders with disabilities.

In the new numbering system, Ann Arbor local routes are numbered 21 through 33, with the numbers going clockwise around downtown. Ypsilanti local routes are numbered 41 through 47, also going clockwise. Routes in the 60s are crosstown connectors that don't serve either city's transit center, while those that do are numbered 3 through 6. Express routes are numbered in the 90s.

What won't change: Routes 4, 5, and 6 and the intercity routes 46 and 67.

The changes come as part of a five-year transportation improvement program funded by the Public Transportation millage that voters approved in May 2014. That August saw improvements that included later weekday

new Sunday service. In August 2015, the transportation authority phased in later weekend service and boosted several routes, among other changes.

TheRide is also currently reviewing proposed policy changes that would affect A-Ride, the paratransit program.

For more information, visit theride.org.

Deborah Freer, community outreach coordinator, recommends that bus passengers sign up for MyAlerts so that TheRide can keep them posted about service disruptions. Several lines in particular are expected to face delays due to construction.

Passengers with questions can call 734-996-0400, check TheRideYourWay.org, or email askus@theride.org. Freer says they will answer emails within 24 hours.

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Jim Toy – renowned activist and LGBTQ champion

by Dave Franklin
Groundcover Contributor

“When the pupil is ready, the teacher appears.” – Confucius

“When the people are ready, the leaders appear.” – unknown

Jim Toy is to the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Queer (LGBTQ) community what Martin Luther King, Jr. was to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

During a time of great civil unrest – the nationwide anti-Vietnam war protests – Toy came forward in 1970 at an anti-war rally at Kennedy Square in Detroit and declared his sexual orientation. He became the first openly gay man in Michigan. It was a dangerous time to be so bold, so personally honest and true to one’s nature.

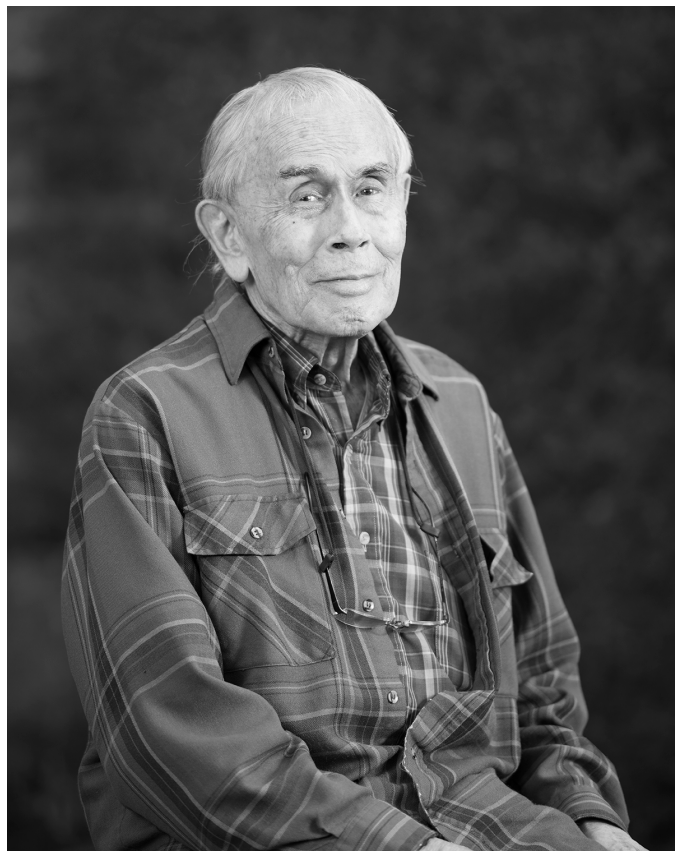
Toy’s subsequent activism and achievements have earned him grateful recognition from the LGBTQ community and the public, as well as accolades from academia. A prolific author, Toy notably co-authored the first official “Lesbian-Gay Pride Week Proclamation” by the governing body of the Ann Arbor City Council and the Diocesan Human Sexuality Curriculum.

Toy was instrumental in establishing the Ann Arbor Gay Liberation Front, the City of Ann Arbor HIV/AIDS Task Force, the Ann Arbor Gay Hotline and the Human Sexuality Office at the University of Michigan (U-M). He also advocated for U-M to amend its non-discrimination bylaws to include sexual orientation as a protected category. Toy was appointed as a founding member of the Diocesan Commission on Human Sexuality by the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, serving as its Secretary since 1971.

We were honored to ask Mr. Toy the following questions as he prepares to address a large audience at the Big Hearts for Seniors screening of the film *Letter to Anita* at the Michigan Theater on May 26. This documentary explores how yesterday’s discrimination shaped today’s LGBTQ older adults. What follows is an excerpt from our conversation. You can read the fascinating interview in its entirety on the Groundcover News website, groundcovernews.org.

[JT: Jim Toy; RD: Rachel Dewees, Director of Turner Senior Resource Center; ZB: Zsuzsa Blom, Groundcover News board member]

RD: What in your early life sent you down this path?



Jim Toy shares some activism pointers and continues advocating for the LGBTQ community, especially for older adults forced back in the closet by insensitive end-of-life care institutions.

JT: I grew up in Ohio during the 30s and 40s. My father was ethnically Chinese and my mom was white. There were three families of color only, in a total population of 1,200. Racism was rampant. I was in middle school during the Second World War. Around my neck I wore a sign with black letters on white that said “I am not a Jap.” Because apparently my peers were on my case, either thinking or wanting to believe that I was Japanese.

I still am full of internalized racism. And I am full of all the other *isms* that were rampant in the village: classicism on the basis of economic status, sexism, religious prejudice. And to this day, getting back to the internalized racism, my metaphor for myself is a banana: I may be yellow on the outside but, thank you, I am white inside. And at least I am aware of that particular “ism” and I hope of the others.

RD: When you talk about the “isms,” you mean that you experienced them being on the other side of them as well as becoming aware that you have them yourself?

JT: Absolutely. And it was only years later, after I came out of my – what should I say – gay closet, that I began to get involved with, or directly involved with what some of us refer to as social action. I moved from Manhattan in 1957, to work in a radical Episcopal church in Detroit because the rector had met me when I was a kid and later invited me to come to the church to take the music program.

He, with the help of some of the members of the congregation, integrated the church racially. It became the first interracial Episcopal Church in Detroit. He moved on, and then the next rector further opened up the church, also allowing the church building to serve as a sanctuary for men who were attempting to flee the draft. This was during the Vietnam War. They would take refuge there on their way to Canada.

And that same church, under the same rector, became a sanctuary for people at risk of physical violence during the Detroit riots. So this was then an example, for me, of social ac-

tion, what the church was trying to do. I was a bystander, an onlooker. I took no part in it until in 1970, six months or so after the Stonewall riots in New York City.

I saw a note on the church calendar that said “Gay meeting, January something 1970.” There never had been, at least in Michigan, an openly “gay” meeting.

“Gay” referring, as it so often does now, to lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals. Gender identity – transgender – was not in anyone’s picture then. So, I went to the priest – radical years, radical vocabulary – and said, “Daddy-oh (that’s what we called him), what is this gay meeting thing?”

He said, “I don’t have a clue. One of the guys in the draft resistance movement asked, ‘Can we have a gay meeting here?’ and I said back to him ‘Well, whatever it is if we can’t have a ‘gay’ meeting here we might as well shut this God-box down.’” Which is how we referred to the church in those radical years.

I, from the depths of my closet, said, “Thank you, thank you,” and went back to Ann Arbor where I was in grad school at U-M at the time. I ran right down to the gay bar and there was my good buddy at the time and I said, “John, there’s something very strange going on at the God-box.” He said, “What’s that?” I said, “A gay meeting.” He said, “What’s that?” I said, “I don’t know! Should we go?”

We agonized for a month. We both were totally in the closet, aside from going to the bar, because there was no resource, no gathering place for lesbians, gays, and bisexuals at the time in Ann Arbor. We finally trekked off to Detroit. That marked our coming out to each other, to ourselves, to the dozen

see JIM TOY, page 5



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Interview with activist Jim Toy

continued from page 4

or so women and men who were taking the risk of coming to the meeting. We decided to start an ongoing group and called it Detroit Gay Liberation Movement.

John and I went in there three to four times a week for meetings. That got pretty old pretty quickly, so we said, “Why don’t we start a group in Ann Arbor?” We put an ad in *The Michigan Daily*. About 100 people showed up to the first meeting and we formed the Ann Arbor Gay Liberation Front (AAGLF). We met in the Michigan Union every week.

The secretary there said, “Jim, do you guys know there are people paid here to head up an office for women students at U-M? And there’s also paid people to head up an office for black students. Do you guys want an office for yourselves?”

At the next meeting of the AAGLF I asked, “Do we want such a group for us?” They looked at me like some kind of fool. “Yes, we want an office, go get it.” I told the secretary, “Yes we want an office. How do we get it?” “Write me a memo,” she said.

About six to eight months later (a nanosecond in bureaucratic time), they had given us an office in the Michigan Union and hired Cynthia Gair and me to head up the office in the fall of 1971. The University took the enormous risk of creating the office; it was the first one in the world, let alone in the United States. I worked there for 23 years or so.

RD: When you think about people in social activism, are there certain qualities you feel they should possess that would make them more successful?

JT: One of the principles that I learned at the School of Social Work is to transform a problem into a statement of a goal, a positive goal that is achievable and that is visible. So, the person who’s got the problem can tell when they’ve achieved that goal.

“We want justice” is a big vision statement. Narrow that down to something like, “We are being mistreated by whomever and here’s our example.” Follow up with, “How would you like to be treated by that group?” And by that we mean, “What might you be able to convince the group to do on your behalf that’s positive for you?” Then we need some practical steps to get us where we need to go with this concern, steps that we can take and know that, when we have taken them, they have produced a positive result.

I also learned that when I’m trying to produce some kind of positive change in any particular agency or group, if I can, I should become a part of that group and work from the inside.

Personally, I have tried to achieve some kind of balance between listening as sympathetically as I can to the concerns of whoever I’m talking with, and speaking out openly and as persuasively as I can to and on behalf of whoever I’m trying to help. And if I’m not a member of the group I’m trying to help, I try to be an ally. For example, I try to ally with women.

Another principle is to be more open and direct about what I am trying to do when I’m working at a lower level of the bureaucracy in a complex organization like U-M. I was trying to consult with people who were in the closet at upper levels of the administration. They very clearly and very accurately said, “At my level I can NOT be open. I cannot even come out of the closet. But you guys that are lower down in the bureaucracy; you can.”

And when serving as an ally, I listened as best I could to what the people who needed or wanted allies wanted us to do. We didn’t go charging out trying to help women, doing what we thought we should do. We consulted with the women with whom we were working, the Women’s Liberation Group.

ZB: Sounds like mutual respect.

JT: I learned a hard lesson at the office that the University had given us. We had co-coordinators for 23 years, a woman and a man, and our administrative assistant was also woman. At one of our staff meetings my co-coordinator and our assistant said, “Just a minute!” They looked at me and I said, “What?” and they said, “You are so sexist!” I said, “What?” They said, “You are so sexist!” And I said, “What do you mean?” “Well, for example you interrupt us all the time.” I was not aware of that and said, “I’m so sorry.” Well, a minute later I interrupted them again so it was a hard lesson! Male privilege, right? Male sexism, yeah.

Let me give another example of trying to be an ally. During the black action movement strike in 1970, they basically shut down central campus because they [the activists] were striving for a 10 percent black student enrollment, and were not getting it. So they were picketing in front of Angell Hall. I went over and said “I’m going to stand with you guys.” And they said, “No, you aren’t!” I said, “No?” They said “You’re going to give us a bad name because you’re

gay!” So maybe five years ago, *The Daily* ran a retrospective on the black action movement strike. They had on the front page of *The Daily* a picture of a march up State Street. The only banner visible said “Gay Liberation Front!” Well that’s ironic!

ZB: They are still aiming for 10 percent.

JT: That’s incredible! I think it’s seven percent now.

RD: What are your thoughts on the issues and implications of working for social change for older adults who are gay, lesbian, bisexual?

JT: Elder people in this country are by-and-large treated with ignorance, disdain, and sometimes active harassment and discrimination. I’m a member of a group in Detroit, Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE), that is affiliated with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). They are working on the concerns of TBLGQ [an alternative term to “LGBTQ” – Toy orders the groups by the level of discrimination they face] people who are aging. For example, we need training about TBLGQ concerns in our institutions that are set up to address the needs of elder people.

RD: Can you elaborate on the training needed in these institutions?

JT: We hear, for example, that there aren’t any gay people here. Well of course the staff aren’t aware that there are because the environment is so toxic. Never have I seen in an agency that serves the elderly any indication that they are aware that TBLGQ people exist. No magazines, no books, no videos, no photos of same sex couple for example. The education has to start, I believe, with the administration of any particular agency, and then work down administrative levels so that every person who is an employee there or a staff person or a member of the administrative board becomes clearly aware of these concerns.

My stepmom was living in assisted living and my sibs and I were down there visiting one Sunday. The staff brought in a guitar trio for entertainment. They played a couple of numbers and then the leader began making anti-gay jokes.

In Arbor Hospice, 10 years ago, my friend and I were invited to do a training on TBLGQ concerns and the staff were really receptive. We thanked them and they asked, “What should we do?” We said our thing and then asked about their pastoral care visitors.

“How aware are you of their beliefs and attitudes towards gender identity and sexual orientation concerns?” we asked. “Some churches and synagogues are really supportive and some are certainly ‘anti-TBLGQ’ concerns.”

“Oh, we never thought of that!” they said. So we suggested they vet the people who come here to provide pastoral care. If I’m on my deathbed I don’t need someone to tell me to change or I’m going to hell.

RD: That’s an end-of-lifespan issue for all home health agencies. It seems practically criminal and truly tragic for somebody to feel that in order to get good care at the end of their life they need to again deny who they are.

JT: One of my lesbian activist friends who worked in Detroit for decades had to enter a facility on the west side of the state, very upscale as things go, and sent me a message, “Here I am and I’m totally back in the closet because I have sensed that the atmosphere here is not in my favor.”

RD: These are the reasons that we wanted this topic and the film *Letter for Anita* for the Big Hearts event. We see lots of room for improvement in the five agencies that will benefit. We also see an opportunity to educate the community. Can you say why you wanted to become involved in Big Hearts?

JT: This event, I hope, will bring concerns about harassment and discrimination against TBLGQ people, racial minorities, people with lower economic status and people living with disabilities – anyone who is deemed and judged negatively to be different in a negative sense – to the minds of the people who come to see this documentary film. Hopefully, this film will make it clear that discrimination and harassment are rampant and must be addressed. In *Letter to Anita*, Ronnie had to deal with discrimination on a personal level and so she did. Easy for me to say. It was painful and it must have been debilitating to her beyond belief, yet it’s uplifting because Ronnie has documented for us her own story, of losing custody of her children to her then husband, and how she went about doing that. That, for me, is an example of transforming a harmful situation into as positive of one as she was able at the time to achieve.

RD: Thank you so much for giving us your time.

JT: Thank you for yours, too.

Muslims in Ann Arbor: still waiting to be fully embraced

by Maria Hagen
Groundcover Intern

In a town as culturally progressive as Ann Arbor, the recent anti-Islamic chalking that appeared on the Diag at the University of Michigan campus at the end of March was a shock to many in the community.

Zainab Farhat, a graduate student in social work and public health from Dearborn, and a Muslim, said that she was not surprised. "When you grow up with this identity post-9/11 you expect this," she said. Even in Ann Arbor, she said, anti-Muslims sentiment exists, "but people don't think it does."

What did surprise Farhat was the reaction of her friends and acquaintances who contacted her to apologize, to ensure she was all right, and to stand in solidarity. As a graduate student, Farhat rarely crosses the Diag so she never saw the chalking. "For those who walk through there it can be triggering, especially when they are stressed out and away from home," she said. "I consider myself emotionally mature and I can find balance because I'm numb to these things."

The University did not remove the chalking. President Mark Schlissel released a statement condemning the message on the Diag and stating that it goes against University values to attack one group – but also saying that the right to free speech, even speech that wounds, must remain protected. When asked about this response by the University, Farhat said it was frustrating.

"It's frustrating because it gives the University a way to be neutral. Saying that it doesn't align with values is very different from removing it. It was something simple the University could have done."

Several student groups at U-M gathered on the Diag in solidarity with their Muslim neighbors, and another office on campus put up a small sign in their window saying "Muslim students are



Anti-Muslim graffiti was scrawled in chalk in the University of Michigan Diag. Photo by Maria Hagen.

welcome." In a tense moment like this one, the impact of such gestures is huge.

The chalking was an assemblage of provocative phrases, including "#StopIslam" and "Trump 2016." With the election season underway, identities are being politicized, said Farhat.

Omar Mohamed, outreach chair at the Islamic Center in Ann Arbor, agreed in a separate interview. "Ann Arbor is very welcoming, but there is a dark side to all of us," he said. "When xenophobic rhetoric becomes common, that side comes out... This chalking couldn't have been done without Trump. And Trump himself is the result of a process." Mohamed went on to explain that, throughout history, we have often seen the political rise of someone who targets a specific demographic. "They are not bad people," Mohamed said of Trump supporters. "It is easy to blame other people but we have to step away and see the whole picture."

Mohamed said he was surprised by how many people came to the recent open house at the Islamic Center of Ann Arbor. "Several hundred guests appeared, including the mayor," he said. "The love they showed spoke for itself."

fundamentalism, great. But are you also concerned about Christian, or Jewish, or any other faith's fundamentalism?" asked Greg Briggs, associate pastor at Bethlehem United Church of Christ in Ann Arbor and member of the One Human Family movement. "Islam is a faith like, any other faith, and people should just be respected as individuals, free to practice whatever they believe."

One Human Family is an interfaith group raising awareness about the alienation of Muslims in Michigan. According to Briggs, sometimes Muslim families come to them at the Farmer's Market and thank them for their support. The organization sells yard signs with the message "We support refugees and our Muslim neighbors," and several local churches that participate in the movement have displayed these words on large banners.

"Actions like this chalking frustrate us," said Farhat. Both she and Mohamed emphasized the level of diversity in Islam, and many different paths people take in it. "There are almost two billion Muslims in the world, so they can't all be bad," said Mohamed.

The earth laughs in flowers.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Houses and Hearts: helping seniors stay at home

by Maria Hagen

Located in an unassuming brick building on Plymouth Rd., the Housing Bureau for Seniors accomplishes work that is easily overlooked by those whose lives do not rely on it. This small organization, a branch of the University of Michigan Health System, helps older adults – an often forgotten part of our population – either keep the homes that they have or transition to a new place. This immensely difficult task is further complicated by the fact that the actions taken are determined by the needs of the individual client.

“What many people don’t realize is that housing truly is a health care issue,” said Janet Hunko, head of the Housing Bureau for Seniors. “If you don’t have housing, what else do you have? It’s that roof over your head that isn’t about to be taken away from you. It makes everything else that much easier when you have that place. It really is the foundation of health for older adults.”

The bureau runs a number of programs, mostly focused on helping people stay in the home that they have. In foreclosure prevention, the bureau works with a homeowner to keep them from losing the house they own due to falling behind on payments. According to Hunko, most of these cases arise from unpaid property taxes because the older person forgets to pay or because there is a change in household income, often due to the passing of a spouse. A similar program helps renters who are at risk of eviction to either stay in their current residence or transition to another place.



Janet Hunko heads the Housing Bureau for Seniors, one of five members of the fundraising organization, Big Hearts for Seniors.

The home share program is slightly more complicated because it involves more people. This program is a resource for elderly homeowners who need additional income, and for a younger person – often a graduate student – who is looking for an affordable place to live. “It’s the most fantastic program,” said Margie Nemerovski, who has been a part of the home share program for seven years. The person coming in – the home seeker – helps with the household tasks in exchange for lower rent while also providing the home owner with company and support. For instance, Nemerovski said that she needs someone who is social and will talk with her, and only requires help with few chores. “I’m not as old maybe as some of the people in home share. They maybe have some

80-year-olds who may need more assistance like getting the mail or grocery shopping,” she said, adding that she only really needed help with mowing the lawn, raking leaves, and shoveling snow.

Because this program involves two strangers getting along in very close quarters, there is an extensive application process that includes questions about sleeping patterns, temperature preferences and much more, as well as a meeting before any decisions are made. Once the seeker and the provider both agree, they sign a contract for a month, which can be terminated at any time given 30 days’ notice. “It’s set up to really help seniors to stay in their homes,”

said Nemerovski. “It’s fabulous. I’m a huge fan!”

If anyone above the age of 55 wants assistance determining the best housing for the future, the Housing Bureau offers a number of different ways to help. The best way to contact them is through their website, www.med.umich.edu/seniors, where all the information about their programs can be found, or simply by calling them at their office at (734) 998-9339. Through a number of assessments, the Bureau will find the individual the place that best serves the homeowner’s needs, whether that includes help remembering to take medication or just having company. Every year the Bureau puts out a housing guide that shows what is available and what the requirements are for each place.

“It may be a bit of a wait,” said Hunko. “Unfortunately, money helps people get where they need a lot faster.”

Some waiting periods are up to three years long, and there is little help for people needing housing in the meantime, especially for low-income people who are more likely to end up on waiting lists since there are fewer places for them to go.

The generation that is now retiring and entering assisted living facilities is the same generation that was a part of the

see HOUSES & HEARTS, page 11

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 Ingrid Sheldon Present

Letter to Anita

How yesterday’s discrimination shaped today’s LGBTQ older adults

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Remarks by
Dr. Ronni Sanlo and Jim Toy

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Mass Schedule

Saturday
 5:00 p.m.

Sunday
 7:00 a.m. 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 12:00 p.m. & 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 5:00 p.m. Mass will not be held on Memorial Day weekend

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www.stfrancisa2.com

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2	6	3	1		9	7		
			7					9
9				3				
6	5				3			
3			6		4			8
			5				9	3
				4				2
7					2			
		2	9		7	5	4	6

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote:

SN GBBRO GBT'W HUQRW
YJNBGZHM HFGTF; SN GBBRO GB
HUQRW LHTWGTF WQ EOSHGT
CGFQEQRB HTV NQRWJPRM GT
SN BYGEGW.

– EQU MQLO

Clue: $\Omega = \aleph$

ACROSS

1. Denigrate
6. Not near
10. Show one's cards
14. Very
15. Ms. Tierney
16. Musical piece
17. Misnumber
19. Skin
20. Beset
21. Pair
22. Apportion
23. Tournament
25. _____ Lisa
27. Easy as _____
30. Hip hop performer
32. Construction worker's need
36. Fictional monster
38. Sea creature
40. Beast
41. _____ Croft
42. Cavities
44. Kal's cousin
45. _____ barrel
47. Mineral
48. College course, for short
49. _____ Fair
51. Play _____
52. Conjunctions
53. Pronoun
55. Ethereal thing
58. Fictional captain
61. Cloth
63. Audio gear
67. Tropical island
68. Cinematography
70. Continuously
71. Biblical figure
72. Actor Nick
73. Proof of ownership
74. John Sanford's stage name
75. Birds

DOWN

1. Turquoise
2. Sticky fare
3. Supports
4. _____punk
5. Spooky
6. Before
7. Enmity

Noble and royal words

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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17					18						19			
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45				46		47					48			
49					50		51					52		
			53			54		55		56	57			
58	59	60			61		62		63			64	65	66
67					68			69						
70					71					72				
73					74					75				

8. Year
9. Update the machinery
10. Comic strip canine
11. Cleveland's lake
12. Fluff
13. Florida county
18. Tighten
24. Deck of 78
26. Snatch
27. Lit
28. Interjection of approval
29. Doctor
31. Dinner dish
33. Constellation
34. Trial and _____
35. Horses
37. First to arrive

39. Down
43. Rift
46. Turmoil
50. Beach denizen
54. Improved wages
56. Pricked
57. Tea
58. Sleeping
59. Own
60. Nautical direction
62. Pleased
64. Antagonize
65. Fictional tree creatures
66. Curve with an inflection
69. Clear as _____

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond



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Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1, or the face value of the paper. I agree not to ask for more than face value or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell

to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
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- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

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8:30 am and 10:00 am

Sunday school at 10:15 am

Fellowship Hour follows each service

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- May 7 (Sat) Concert by the American Guild of Organists, 3:00
- May 8 (Sun.) Concert by the Ann Arbor Youth Chorale, 4:00 (For tickets, 996-4404)
- May 14 (Sat.) Happy Mother's Day
- May 15 (Sun.) German Pretzel Sales, 10:30 – 12:00, \$1 or \$10 dozen
- May 15 (Sun.) Bethlehem Concert Series: Gail and Andrew Jennings, 4:00
- May 27 (Fri.) German Pretzel Sales, 11:00 – 2:00, \$1 or \$10 dozen
- May 30 (Mon.) Memorial Day

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Article to my mother

by La Shawn Courtwright
Vendor #56

I'm so grateful for my mother. She taught me how to read, write, work, cook, clean, and a lot of valuable lessons about life. I didn't always take heed of all of the things that she would tell me and I've had my share of regrets. I treasure having a mother that I can call and talk to. I can't and don't want to think of not having my mom here. We've had some ups and down and it wasn't easy for me to get along with my mom for a number of years. I had to forgive her and myself for us to get back to where we are. There were times that didn't feel loved and was very rebellious to my mom. If she said "go right," I'd head left. I realized that I thought I was only hurting myself. It didn't dawn on me that when I was hurting myself, I was hurting her too. I appreciate and have a newfound respect for my mother than I did earlier in my life's journeys.

I want my mom to know that I wouldn't change a thing because that's what made me who I am today. I will honor my mother by being the very best I can be.

So, thank you, Mom, for all of the blood, sweat and tears it took to help me be a better me today. Most of all, thank for not giving up on me. I love you always, Mom.

A mother's love
Is a many treasured thing
And on to her love
I cling
To hear her voice
And see her face
Bring much joy to
My heart
I never want to
From her heart be apart
She loved me before I knew
How to love myself
I place her love first
Cause it's like nothing else
A mother's love
Is unique in kind
When I'm goin' through somethin'
My dear mother's teachings come to mind
That's why a mother's love
Is unique
Like nothing to it
Can compare
I love my mom
And for her
I'll always be there
Thank you Mom
For your loving
Caring WAY
To you, for that,
I wish you a
Happy Mother's DAY!

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Pound of flesh – a day with a prostitute

by William Crandell
Groundcover Vendor #328

Last week I met a woman named Michelle and it turned into one of the most provocative evenings of my life.

I had stopped by the apartment of a friend of mine to see what he was up to and he introduced me to her. I remember thinking at the time that she looked like a soccer mom, with her hair in a neat ponytail, conservative clothing, and the way she kept glancing at her phone like she was waiting to have to go and pick somebody up. The two of them had been smoking crack that night prior to my arrival and even though I never used the drug I had been around it enough addicts in the late 80s and early 90s to recognize the chemical smell that permeated the air.

After about a half hour of chatting she asked me for a ride. I had a pretty good idea of what she wanted and I was immediately intrigued. When she told me that she wanted me to drive her to another friend's house, I knew I'd guessed right. One thing that I knew for certain about cocaine is that the party didn't end until the money ran out, and though she kept telling us that she was broke, I had a strong suspicion that she had at least a little left. I had nowhere to be in the morning and I could tell my friend was ready for bed, so I decided to follow curiosity and agreed to give her a lift.

When we drove away from the house she told me that she worked as a prostitute. She also told me she was going on a date and wanted to know if I would wait for her and then take her home afterwards. Sensing an opportunity, I asked her if I could interview her and she said yes. It turned into one of the most interesting nights of my life.

She agreed to the interview on the terms that she remain anonymous and would only discuss her work as a prostitute and her addiction. She explained that she didn't want to reveal any more than that for fear of one of her family members discovering her identity.

I asked her to start at the beginning. As I drove, I started asking her questions, scribbling down her answers at stop-lights. She told me that she had chosen Michelle as a fictional name, and that was the alias that she normally worked under. Michelle went on to state that she was 35 years old and had been prostituting for the past few years. She explained that getting into prostitution was easy for her.

"I ran out of rock one night and decided to try posting an ad on Backpages.com; it was that simple. I needed to get high and I knew another girl who had done it." Now Michele makes between \$200-500 per night.

When I asked her if she had ever had a pimp, she "no" and stated that she preferred to run her own business. "Why should I give my money to some man? I smoke up what I make and pay bills. I've got kids to feed."

Michelle told me that she had been physically and sexually abused from ages six to about 13 by two male members of her family. I could tell from the look in her eyes she didn't want discuss the subject anymore, but she did tell me that she has never received any treatment for the abuse. "At the time nobody believed me. Now I look at it as just one of those things that happen in life," she said. I had a feeling that she has had a lot of those "things" happen to her.

She went on to explain that she has also been raped and beaten three times in the last couple of years by johns. I asked her if she had ever received any treatment she said no – and she couldn't report them, either, because of the illegal nature of her business. Nonetheless, Michelle has had a more than a few

run-ins with law enforcement throughout her life, having multiple arrests for a variety of offenses including shoplifting and drug possession, and has spent a lot of time in jail. "I just put one foot in front of the other every day."

We kept driving and talking. By now, she had gone on five dates and visited nearly as many dealers' houses.


Later that night, we were running out of gas and I had very little money to put in the tank. We swung into a gas station and I gave her the money I had to take care of the gasoline prepay. Before I knew what was happening, she came out of the store with a big smile explaining that she had gotten a woman to pitch in three dollars for gas. I asked her how she had accomplished that and I found her answer surprising. She explained to me that panhandling was all about the story. Tonight she was telling people that her husband had threatened to beat her up and I was a kind stranger who had offered to drive her home but was out of gas. As she said this, she smiled at me, and I noticed just a hint of pain in her face. I understood then

why people wanted to help her – why I wanted to help her, maybe find her some kind of treatment.

When I asked her about working the streets, she explained that she had tried it in the past but didn't like it. One place in particular that she avoids is the Michigan Avenue Corridor in Ypsilanti, as it involves having to meet random men and also has a more active police presence.

The increased police presence there in recent years is due to the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department's Enforcement Against Streetwalkers in Ypsilanti program – or, as it is commonly known, the E.A.S.Y. Program. According to their website, the program was designed to target prostitution along the Michigan Avenue corridor and in Ypsilanti Township. The idea of the program is to combine law enforcement with human services, the judicial system and elected officials to not only get prostitutes off the streets but also to help them stay off the streets and possibly build better lives as well as a healthier community. But to prostitutes

see PROSTITUTE, page 11



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Day with a prostitute

continued from page 10

like Michelle, the program just means a greater chance of being arrested and her relatives finding out about her chosen profession.

Our night ended around five a.m. – at least for me – but Michelle was still planning on going somewhere in a little while. Driving home later, I realized that prostitutes and addicts live in a midnight world, guided by an animalistic instinct to feed whatever their souls crave. It's a naked world under those streetlights of people feeding their impulses, one where predators rule and anyone could be a victim. It is a world many of us will never see or understand. As another addict once told me, "There are no friends among junkies, no partnerships, no brotherhood; everybody steals from everybody – it's just part of the game." Earlier in the night, Michelle had echoed that same thought when she said "it's not about being a professional prostitute, I don't care about that, it's about being an addict and doing whatever you have to do to get a fix."

I had saved the big question till

the end of the evening. When I asked Michelle how she feels about prostituting herself, she said, "It's alright, it's money, it's survival you know. I view my clients as my dates and just a way to get crack. I have no feelings for them, I mean I wouldn't date any of them in my personal life and if I wasn't doing dates I wouldn't want to know any of them because of the sick shit some of them are into. This is about money and getting high and taking care of my kids and nothing else." I could see her point, but from my perspective her habit was bleeding her soul \$20 at a time and one night she may not make it home to those children.

Michelle is not a lazy person, receives no government assistance and is utilizing the only tools she feels she has. Maybe she should be applauded for that – I don't know. But the most important thing to remember about Michelle is that she is a survivor.

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Ann Arbor, MI 48105

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Thanks to GroundCover News for spreading the word and providing an outlet where there was none. We are proud to support your mission and good work!

Houses and Hearts

continued from page 7

gay liberation movement of the 1970s. Despite this, many older LGBTQ people are returning to the closet as they enter communities with other older adults, feeling that they would be unwelcome if they were open about who they are.

The standard language surrounding retirement and care of the elderly is extremely heteronormative, always assuming that the partner is of the opposite sex. In order to become more inclusive, the Housing Bureau for Seniors is changing the language that they use, attempting to get rid of assumptions that people are heterosexual.

"We are open. Our goal is to make this part of the mainstream. This shouldn't be a conversation, it shouldn't be an issue. It should be everyday," Hunko said of her organization and others that they work with.

The Housing Bureau collaborates with four other organizations – collectively known as Big Hearts for Seniors – to raise funds. Each of these agencies focuses on a different facet of aging, yet they work together to help people get the care that they need. Big Hearts has been working together for several years to raise funds for all of the programs. Every spring they organize a big fundraiser. This year they are hosting a reception and showing a film, *A Letter to Anita*, at the Michigan Theater on May 26, highlighting the importance of LGBTQ awareness and acceptance.

"A big part of Big Hearts is to create awareness for what we all do as well," said Hunko. "Yes, it's a fundraiser but it's also equally important to get our name out there, everyone's name out there, to say 'this is what we do and we exist and there are resources for older adults.'"



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Cryptoquote Solution

My issue isn't about physical aging; my issue is about wanting to remain vigorous and youthful in my spirit.
– Rob Lowe

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A	H	A	B			R	A	G		S	T	E	R	E	O
B	A	L	I			F	I	L	M	M	A	K	I	N	G
E	V	E	R			E	S	A	U		N	O	L	T	E
D	E	E	D			R	E	D	D		G	E	E	S	E

GROUNDCOVER NEWS ADVERTISING RATES

Size	Black and White	Color	Approx. Size
Business card	\$49.95	\$65.95	3.5 X 2
1/8	\$89.95	\$129.95	2.5 X 6.5 or 5 X 3.25
1/6	\$129.95	\$165.95	5 X 5
1/4	\$159.95	\$215.95	5 X 6.5
1/2	\$299.95	\$399.95	5 X 14 or 10 X 6.5
Full Page	\$495.95	\$669.95	10 X 14

PACKAGE PRICING

Three Months/Three Issues: 15% off
Six Months/Six Issues: 25% off
Full Year/Twelve Issues: 35% off
Additional 20% off ads with coupons

WHY SHOP CO-OP?



LOCAL

\$1.00 OFF
ANY PURCHASE OF
\$8 OR MORE

One coupon per transaction. Must present coupon at the time of purchase. No other discounts or coop cards apply. Not valid for gift cards, case purchases, beer or wine.

OFFER EXPIRES 5/31/2016.



Café VERDE
FAIR TRADE COFFEE BAR



PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP
BAKERY & NATURAL FOODS GROCERY STORE

216 N. FOURTH AVE.
Ann Arbor, MICHIGAN
Phone (734) 994-9174
PEOPLESFOOD.COOP

White Chocolate Macadamia Cookies

by Liz Bauman
Groundcover Contributor

A perfect combination of flavors!

Ingredients:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup vanilla baking chips
- 1 cup chopped macadamia nuts
- 1 cup dried cranberries



Directions:

In a medium bowl, mix together and set aside flour, baking soda and salt.

Cream together white sugar, light brown sugar and butter (do not use shortening). Add slightly beaten eggs and vanilla.

Add flour mixture until just mixed. Stir in vanilla chips, macadamia nuts and dried cranberries.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Place on ungreased cookie sheet by small scoop or rounded teaspoon. Bake for 10 minutes or just until set. Remove from oven and let cool.

Groundcover Groove

A fundraiser for the INSP trip to Greece and for equipment and office supplies for Groundcover vendors

featuring

Stevie D. and the Wannabees

May 6
7pm to 12am

at the Club Above at the Heidelberg
18+ only

Suggested donation for admission: \$10

Tickets sold in advance and at the door

Email groundcovernews@gmail.com to purchase in advance

[insp] Global Street Paper Summit

14-16 June 2016—Athens, Greece

Inspired by last year's International Network of Street Papers (INSP) Conference, the Groundcover vendor manager and a longtime volunteer registered to attend this year's conference in Athens, Greece. *Join us at the Heidelberg on the evening of May 6 for live music and to raise money to finance their journey.*

Strange (but Mostly True) Stories About a Mother and her Daughter • Cy Klone © 2016

Hey! What's this about you and that squirrel on the balcony?!?

Huh? Yes, I acknowledge seeing a squirrel on the balcony. Are you going somewhere with this?

You know your job is to chase away those intruding on our special outdoor space, right?

I was getting around to it. Besides, the squirrel is smart and stays a step away from an escape route. It's pretty much a standoff as we stare at each other trying to figure each other out. When I twitch the squirrel scurries.

Well as your mother it's important to me that you know your place in the world -and it isn't "figuring out" squirrels!!!

This is me rolling my eyes Mom. Your anti-squirrel bias is a bit out-dated, though I know you mean well. And what's this "my place in the world" stuff?!?

Well, when I was younger the world was different!!

That would sound even funnier if you used your Abe Simpson voice. Happy Mother's Day, Mom!